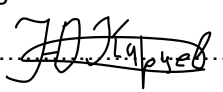


20 PROTEST FORM for FAI Category 1 Championships (Template)

Championship Title: 2023 FAI European Wingsuit Flying Championship and World Cup		
Team / Nation: Finland, Denmark, Kuwait, Moldova, Norway, Poland, Sweden		
Team Leader: Janne Saikko, Dennis Ohlsen, Ali Asker, Iurii Cartev, Remi Damgaard, Jakub Juszcak, Ola Johansson		
Protester Iurii Cartev		
Date and Time of the result of your complaint received from the competition organiser: 10:58 on August 23, 2023		
Description of Protest (against what decision, what penalty?) Against the decision for the complaint against competitors from Italy (Luca Sala) and France (Max Diebold), filed on August 23rd, 2023. See additional details on the attached sheets. (Use additional sheets if necessary)		
Reasons why you think the decision about your complaint is wrong: (use additionally sheets if necessary): Because a violation of the FAI Sporting Code Section 5 – Skydiving by specified individuals has not been recognized and the additional gear checks did not help recognize it because were performed exactly in the same way as before. See additional details on the attached sheets.		
What result do you require from this protest? To thoroughly inspect wingsuits of named individuals for the described infringements and if confirmed, to take an appropriate action according to the current rules.		
Which rules are relevant to your dispute?: FAI Sporting Code Section 5 – Skydiving, definition 15 of section 1.1.2		
List of witnesses you wish to make available:		
Evidence you wish to make available: (example: witness statements, documentary evidence etc.) Photographs attached		
Signature of Team Leader 	Signature of Protestor (not obligatory) 	
Date of this Protest: August 24, 2023	Signature of receipt - Meet Director 	
Time received by MD:	Time received by Jury:	Protest fee paid to MD: Yes/No

Pursuant to the Sporting Code Section 5 (Skydiving), chapter 1, Parachuting Teams of Finland, Denmark, Kuwait, Moldova, Norway, Poland and Sweden are filing a protest against decision for the complaint against competitor from France - Max Diebold and competitor from Italy - Luca Sala.

The reason for the protest is that the violation of the FAI Sporting Code Section 5 – Skydiving by specified individuals has not been recognized and the additional gear checks did not help recognize it because were performed exactly in the same way as before. Please see additional details and photographs below.

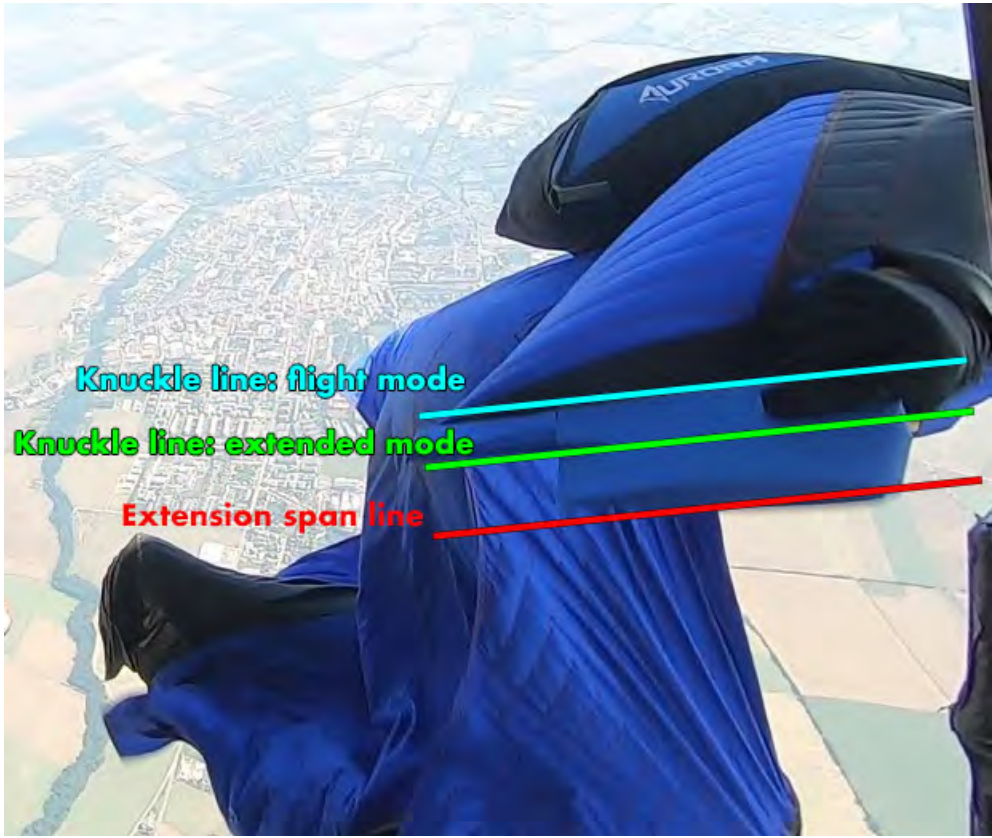
According to the definition 15 of section 1.1.2:

*(15) WINGSUIT: A garment of flexible material forming wings between a parachutist's arms, legs and torso, creating an aerodynamic planform designed to generate forward movement through the air using only the force of gravity. The parachutist's limbs and extremities must serve as the primary frame for the wings. The parachutist's limbs and extremities must serve as the primary frame for the wings. Secondary structural/aerodynamic components (e.g. non-flexible grippers, fins for directional stabilization) may be used. The **span of any structural/aerodynamic components must not extend past the knuckle at the base of the index finger.***

Competitors from France (Max Diebold) and Italy (Luca Sala) are using custom gripper extensions that apparently violate the definition from above, because for both of them gripper extensions/fins extend past the knuckle at the base of the index finger right before and during the flight. This is despite passing the official wingsuit measuring test. Please see attached photographs and conclusions below.

Max Diebold:





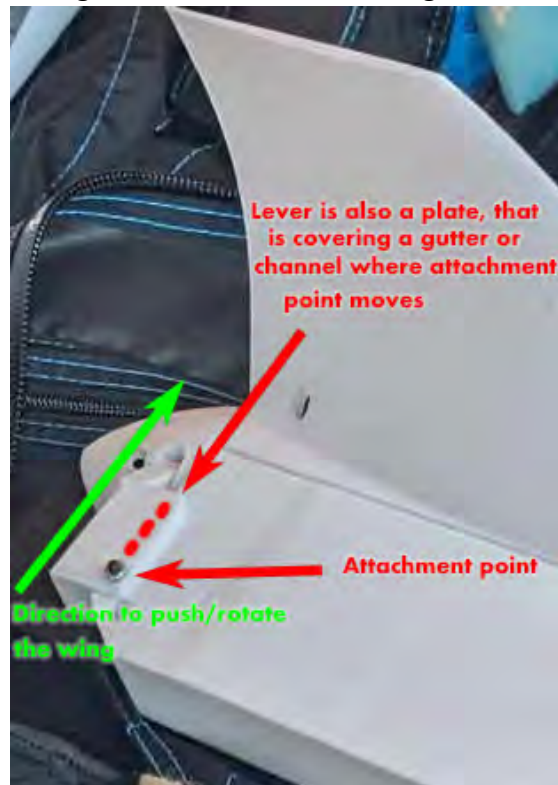
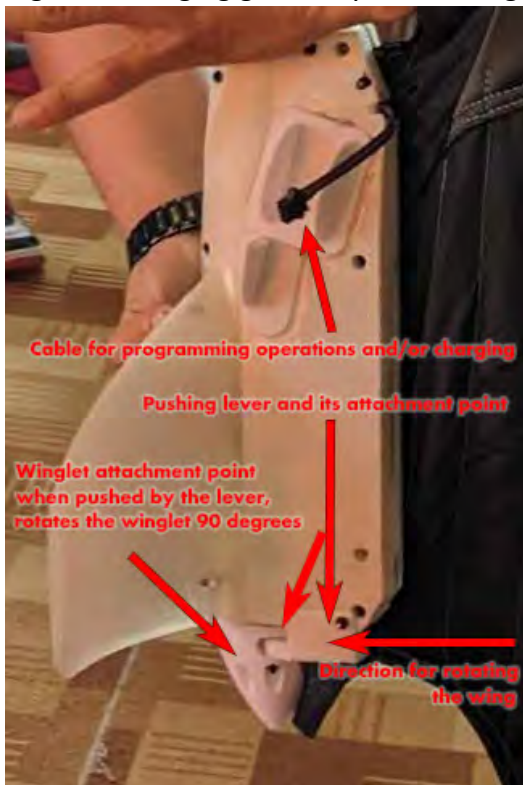
The argument in the reply to our complaint was that Max passed the official measurement test that was done identically for everyone. The photo taken from Max measurement clearly shows wrinkles on the suit (wings and sleeves with leading edge) that indicates that the suit was not fully tensioned and was not put into the “flight mode”. Also, since there is no documented measurements procedure in the rules, it is impossible to apply equal force to all suits to create the necessary and equal tension. The only way to notice possible violation is to put the suit into a “flight mode” by applying tension by the competitor himself (like it happens before and after the exit on the photos above) and then releasing it into “extended hands mode” to check if extensions remain behind the knuckle as definition 15 of section 1.1.2 states. Important thing is that judges must hold the suit in the same position when competitor releases his hands for the measurement.

Luca Sala:





The Judges argument in reply to our complaint was the same: Luca passed the official measurement test that was done identically for everyone. In our opinion the reason Luca passed the test on the ground was a bit different than Max, or at least he might have had an additional reason. After a closer look to his gripper extensions, we agree that both of them might have a sophisticated hidden electronic mechanism inside. That mechanism, if exists, during certain conditions may have the ability to push the lever that would rotate winglet assembly 90 degrees, changing geometry of the wingsuit, forming additional horizontal wings on the sides:



The fact that Luca has his own mechanic to service these gripper extensions specifically shows that his equipment requires professional care.

Additionally, we have noticed that Luca has multiple parts or copies of these grippers, they sometimes slightly differ in colors:



Luca takes the extensions off in the evening and puts them on in the morning. This fact should be taken in consideration during inspection because a different/empty gripper extension might be intentionally presented for an inspection in case such an inspection is known or suspected in advance.

Besides all above, we would like to mention that right after Judges performed an additional measurement check for Luca in the same way it was done before, Luca landed without his competition PLD measuring device (FlySight), claiming that he “lost” it. After that he was granted a re-jump, where he was not additionally checked/measured again. We would like you to please take it into consideration.

Competitors use grippers to give tension to the suit as recommended by the manufacturers. Grippers are used for this purpose when in flight mode (approximately shown by the blue lines above). Although, when grippers are released and hands extended, knuckle naturally goes back outside of the gripper if suit has no violation. Therefore, the intention of the definition 15 of section 1.1.2 was to prevent any extensions going past the knuckle in the extended hand mode (approximately shown by the green lines above).

The definition 15 of section 1.1.2 quoted above does not specify 2 things:

1. In what plane/axis the span of any structural/aerodynamic components must be measured against the knuckle at the base of the index finger – be it forward, backwards, sideways, etc., as well as hand position during measurement (bent back/forward or extended to the side).
2. At which moment the measurements of the secondary structural/aerodynamic components should be made - be it on the ground, in the plane or in the air.

Therefore, it's logical to assume, that if a span of a secondary structural/aerodynamic element extends past the knuckle at the base of the index finger at any moment/place and in any direction (back/forward/sideways), it goes against the rules and can be used for gaining an unfair advantage. The fact that the hand is bent in flight mode versus extended mode should be taken into consideration because it is the way the suits are flown, recommended by the manufacturers:



**Position for flight.
Palm rests against arm wing end cell.**

Considering experience of the last year's Wingsuit Performance Championship in Arizona, it's clear that gripper extensions give huge advantage to those using them. And this was already visible in the current results: after first round Luca held first place having flown the best distance and time rounds of all, while Max held 5th place.

Parachuting Teams of Finland, Denmark, Kuwait, Moldova, Norway, Poland and Sweden fully support event organizers, the Jury and Judges efforts to keep Wingsuit Performance Competition fair. Best athletes from the whole world spend their time and money every year to train hard to represent their countries in the best way possible. When someone gains what seems to be an unfair advantage, it's very frustrating and raises a question regarding the feasibility of participating in such events in the future.

For the benefit of our sport, we kindly suggest a closer inspection of gripper extensions of the named individuals to confirm that it complies with the definition 15 of section 1.1.2. To be fair to the named individuals, we suggest that exactly the same wingsuit checks are performed again for all competitors in the way suggested below.

Suggested additional wingsuit check for everyone: being fully geared up, competitor should stand into the "flight mode" by fully extending his legs and arms. Competitor should hold the grippers the same way he does while flying and apply tension to the suit. Judges should then grab and hold the grippers at that same exact point, while competitor should release his hands and extend them to the sides. The knuckle check should be done at that point.

Suggested additional inspection for Luca's gripper extension: having multiple screws suggests ease of disassembly, therefore inspecting the internals should be fairly straightforward. Therefore, a disassembly with intent to inspect the internals is suggested. If full disassembly seems to not be possible, it would be enough to just unscrew the pushing lever (see photos above) to uncover the gutter/channel for the movement. Important: inspection must be done after Time or Distance round (where glide matters most), exactly after taking back competitor helmet in order to not give a chance to replace gripper extensions with decoy ones since they're easily removable.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Janne Saikko
Head of Delegation from Finland

Dennis Ohlsen
Head of Delegation from Denmark

Ali Asker
Head of Delegation from Kuwait

Iurii Cartev
Head of Delegation from Republic of Moldova

Remi Damgaard
Head of Delegation from Norway

Jakub Juszcak
Head of Delegation from Poland

Ola Johansson
Head of Delegation from Sweden